



Australian Bureau of Statistics

1376.0 - Local Government and ABS, Sep 2009

Previous ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 24/09/2009

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2011 Census of Population and Housing

Includes: Find out more about the **2011 Census**, including how your organisation can be involved in preparations through the **Census Local and Regional Engagement Strategy**.



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WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ABS

Welcome to the latest edition of the 'Local Government and ABS' newsletter.

What's in this issue?

There are two feature articles in this issue. The first article, [The New Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\)](#) provides details on the changes the ABS will be making to statistical geography in 2011, where the ASGS will replace the current Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). The article includes information about how non-ABS structures, such as Local Government Areas, will be incorporated into the ASGS.

The second article, [2011 Census of Population and Housing](#) discusses how your organisation can assist with preparations for the next Census, planned for the night of 9 August 2011, through the Census Local and Regional Engagement Strategy.

Other information in this issue includes an update on [What's happening in Local Government Finance](#) and information about a number of relevant [Recent and Future ABS Releases](#), including an article on internal migration and population growth, the latest population estimates by age and sex, and the upcoming release of the National Regional Profile.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative, and we welcome your feedback and comments.

Lisa Conolly

Director
Regional Statistics Branch

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THE NEW AUSTRALIAN STATISTICAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARD

In 2011 the ABS will replace the current Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) with the new Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS). The ASGS will be used for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. The current ASGC regions such as Census Collection Districts (CCDs), Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) and Statistical Divisions (SDs) will disappear to be replaced by the new Statistical Areas Levels 1 to 4.

Regions of the ASGS

The ASGS brings all the regions used by the ABS to output data under the one umbrella. They are divided into two broad categories:

1. ABS structures, those regions which are defined and maintained by the ABS.
2. Non-ABS structures, those regions defined and maintained by other organisations, but for which the ABS supplies data.

The ABS structures is a hierarchy of regions developed for the release of particular ABS statistics.

Mesh blocks are the smallest area geographical region. There are approximately 340,000 covering the whole of Australia. They broadly identify land use such as: residential, commercial, agriculture and parks etc. Residential and agricultural mesh blocks usually contain 30 to 60 households. Mesh blocks are the building block for all the larger regions of the ASGS. Only limited Census data, total population and dwelling counts will be released at the mesh block level.

Statistical Area Level 1s (SA1s) will be the smallest region for which a wide range of Census data will be released. They will have an average population of about 400, somewhat smaller than the current CCDs. They will be built from whole mesh blocks and there will be approximately 60,000 covering the whole of Australia.

Statistical Area Level 2s (SA2s) will have an average population of about 10,000, with a minimum population of 3,000 and a maximum of 25,000. The SA2s are the key regions of the ASGS, because they are the regions for which the majority of ABS sub-state intercensal data, for example Estimated Resident Population and Health and Vital Statistics, will be released. There will be about 2,300 SA2s, built from whole SA1s.

Statistical Area Level 3s (SA3s) are a medium sized region with a population of 30,000 to 130,000. They represent the functional areas of regional cities and large urban transport and service hubs. They will be built from whole SA2s.

Statistical Area Level 4s (SA4s) will be used for the release of Labour Force Statistics and will be designed specifically as a geographical region suitable for their release. They will in turn be built from whole SA3s.

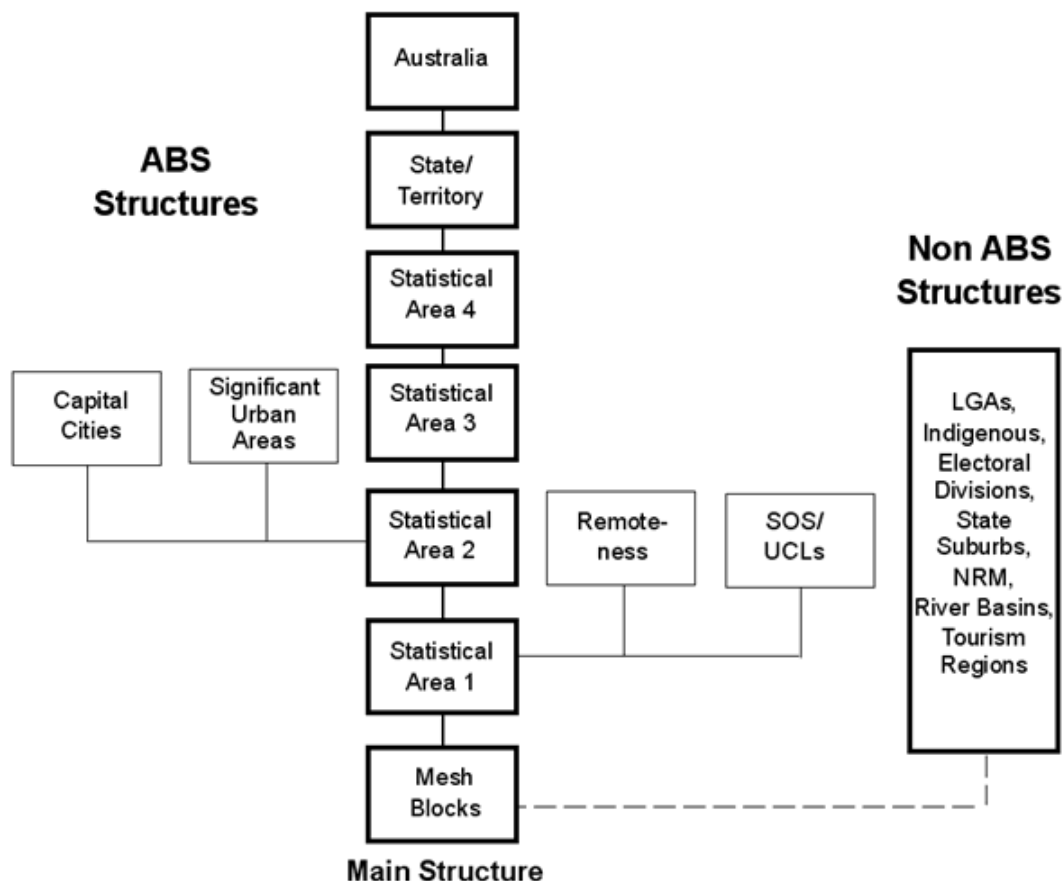
Urban Centres/Localities, Section of State and Remoteness Areas will be broadly comparable to previous Censuses.

Capital Cities and Significant Urban Areas define the major cities and towns of Australia with a population over 10,000 people. They will contain the urban area itself and any likely growth in the next 15 years, plus any immediately associated semi-rural development. The ASGS Capital City definition will be very similar to

the current Capital City Statistical Division.

Non-ABS structures will be approximated or built directly from mesh blocks or SA1s. The Non-ABS structures include such important regions as: Local Government Areas (LGAs), postal areas, state gazetted suburbs and electoral divisions. LGAs remain part of the ASGS and the ABS will continue to support LGAs with the data it currently provides.

The diagram below summarises the overall structure of the ASGS.



Release of the ASGS

The ABS will publish the ASGS manual with the boundaries, labels and codes for the SA units and Capital Cities in late 2010. The ASGS will come into effect on the 1 July 2011. The Non-ABS structures will be released at the time of the 2011 Census; this is to ensure that the Census is released on the most up to date boundaries available. Urban Centres and Localities, Section of State, Remoteness and Significant Urban Areas will be released after the 2011 Census as they require an analysis of Census data to be developed. Data on SLAs will still be available for the 2011 Census, but for 2012 and beyond ABS data will only be released on the ASGS regions. The regions defined in the ABS structures will not change until the next Census in 2016, although the Non-ABS structures will be updated annually.

Contacts

If you have any questions regarding the ASGS please email geography@abs.gov.au.

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2011 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

The Census is the largest statistical collection undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and one of the most important. The next Census, Australia's 16th, is planned for the night of 9 August 2011. The ABS estimates that there will be in excess of 9 million dwellings included in the next Census.

The 2006 Census achieved good outcomes in many regions, however the results also showed us that we need to focus on improving coverage to ensure the Census count is the best possible. We aim to do this through initiatives that:

- increase support for the Census at the community level
- utilise local knowledge and intelligence
- improve awareness of recruitment of Census field staff, and
- raise awareness and promote the benefits of the 2011 Census.

We are looking to establish a network of organisations that are interested in the Census and making sure their community counts. We aim to involve this network of organisations in these initiatives.

For more information and to be part of the planning for the 2011 Census, contact the Census Engagement Officer in your state or territory

NSW	(02) 9268 4219
VIC	(03) 9615 7520
QLD	(07) 3222 6155
SA	(08) 8237 7588
WA	(08) 9360 5181
TAS	(03) 6222 5985
NT	(08) 8943 2123
ACT	(02) 6252 8924

More information on the Census can be found in the [2011 Census home page](#). For further information about how your organisation can be involved in the 2011 Census, see the [2011 Census of Population and Housing Local and Regional Engagement Strategy \(cat. no. 2911.0.55.001\)](#).

This page last updated 20 September 2010

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE

Collections

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) collects and publishes regular data on Local Government Finance, including the amount and purpose of local government expenditure. Annual financial data is collected from each state's Grants Commission/Department of Local Government and the ABS also undertakes quarterly sample surveys of councils.

Annual

Currently, the Grants Commission/Department of Local Government for each state are dispatching their electronic forms for the Annual 2008-09 Local Government Finance Collection. The financial and function data on these forms are edited with the output being used by the ABS to compile Government Finance Statistics. Data is expected to be published in Government Finance Statistics, Australia (cat. no. 5512.0) in early April next year.

The ABS return dates differ across jurisdictions, with some seeking information as early as mid-October and others due by the end of November. Returning forms earlier than the due date will greatly assist both the Grants Commission/Department of Local Government and the ABS to achieve their data processing schedules.

Quarterly

The ABS also conducts a quarterly survey of financial information which will be dispatched to a small selected sample of councils in the third week of September. There have been no changes to the actual questions, but some definitions have been updated to make the form clearer with regard to where financial data items should and should not be included. Responses to the quarterly survey are required by 8 October 2009 (6 working days after the end of the quarter). Early attention to getting the forms to the ABS will ensure that the financial activity of local government is accurately represented in Australia's National Accounts.

The ABS thanks councils for their cooperation in providing high quality data for these collections. Information provided is used in making important policy decisions concerning the sector and it is important that accurate and timely information is returned by councils in building this data set.

Other Developments

ABS and Grants Commissions/Department of Local Governments working together

The ABS and Grants Commissions/Department of Local Governments are continuing to work toward improving the consistency of finance data collected by each state or territory for Local Government finance statistics.

The ABS recently liaised with the Grants Commissions to discuss the proposed National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) of financial data items. This data set has been proposed by the ABS to improve data consistency across the jurisdictions in the collection of Local Government finance statistics and to minimise provider load by reducing the need to run separate surveys to meet user requirements.

The NMDS seeks to integrate key user requirements for selected data items from the Income Statement, Cash Flow Statement, Balance Sheet and Reconciliation Statement. For Income and Cash Flow Statements, some of these items are cross-classified by other classifications such as Function (Purpose) Data.

The challenges of implementing the NMDS, as well as the proposed way forward, were discussed with a number of Grants Commissions. For the 2008/09 Annual collection, the focus has been on identifying and addressing priority areas of the Grants Commission survey forms which are inconsistent with the NMDS.

These efforts follow the Grant Commissions Executive Office's meeting on Thursday 12 February 2009 where the ABS and Grants Commissions committed to work towards improving the quality and consistency of local government statistics. At this meeting the ABS and Grants Commissions also continued to work at ways of practically implementing the Local Government Purpose Classification, being mindful of the accounting burden this potentially imposes on councils. The Local Government Purpose Classification (cat. no. 5514.0.55.002) outlines Function related categories of services for local government, such as road services, community development and planning, and environmental protection services.

The ABS is also now engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including the National Local Government Financial Management Forum.

Contact

For further information or inquiries about Local Government Statistics, contact the Local Government Statistical Unit on (07) 3222 6033.

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RECENT AND FUTURE ABS RELEASES

RECENT RELEASES

[Relocation across the nation: Internal migration and population growth](#)

[Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia](#)

[Regional Population Growth](#)

[Australian Standard Geographical Classification](#)

[Use of the Internet on Farms](#)

FUTURE RELEASES

[National Regional Profile](#)

[Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas](#)

[Births](#)

[Deaths](#)

RELOCATION ACROSS THE NATION: INTERNAL MIGRATION AND POPULATION GROWTH

Net internal migration is the difference between the number of people who changed their usual residence by moving into a region and the number who have changed their usual residence by moving out of that region. This movement is a significant factor when considering population growth within Australia's regions. Understanding patterns of migration is important in understanding the needs for infrastructure and services in regions.

[Relocation across the nation: Internal migration and population growth](#), published in the June edition of [Australian Social Trends](#) (cat. no. 4102.0), explores the movements of people to particular cities and regions. The article highlights regions with high levels of internal migration and population growth, such as the south-east region of Queensland and the coastal regions of Mandurah and Bunbury in Western Australia. Examining the characteristics of those people moving to these regions can provide further insight into migration patterns and trends. For example, a larger than average proportion of those aged over 60 years arriving in Mandurah reflects the popularity of this coastal location for retirement.

While the majority of internal migration was seen towards coastal locations, Bendigo and Ballarat, located in central Victoria, were the exceptions to this trend. These two regions were the only two inland areas that experienced positive net internal migration of more than 2,000 people between 2001 and 2006.

To find out more about internal migration and population growth, see the article [Relocation across the nation: Internal migration and population growth](#) in the June edition of [Australian Social Trends](#) (cat. no.

POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX, REGIONS OF AUSTRALIA

Released on 11 August 2009, [Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2008](#) (cat. no. 3235.0) contains preliminary estimates of the resident population by age (in five-year age groups up to 85 and over) and sex as at 30 June 2008 for a range of geographies, including Local Government Areas (LGAs) and Statistical Local Areas (SLAs). It also includes data for 30 June 2003, converted to 2008 boundaries, to allow for comparison over time.

The publication provides an overview of regional trends in the age and sex distribution of Australia's population as well as commentary for each state and territory, covering topics such as median age, children aged under 15 years, the working population, those aged over 65 years and sex ratios (the number of males per 100 females).

Highlights of the data at the LGA level include:

- The LGAs with the highest proportion of their population aged over 65 were Victor Harbor (SA) (31.9%), Queenscliff (Vic) (31.8%) and Great Lakes (NSW) (28.2%).
- High sex ratios were observed in a number of LGAs with significant resources sector activity, such as Roxby Downs in South Australia (135.9) and Ravensthorpe in Western Australia (173.0).
- Excluding LGAs with less than 2,000 people, the LGAs with the highest proportion of children aged under 15 years were Victoria-Daly (33.7%), Roper Gulf (31.5%) and East Arnhem (30.7%), all located in the Northern Territory.

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REGIONAL POPULATION GROWTH

Released on 23 April 2009, [Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2007-08](#) (cat. no. 3218.0) contains estimates of the resident populations of areas of Australia as at 30 June in each year from 2001 to 2008. The publication provides an overview of regional trends in Australia's population growth as well as detailed commentary on regions of growth in each state and territory, with data presented for Local Government Areas (LGAs) and other regions of Australia.

The article [Regional Population Growth](#), published in the June edition of [What's New in Regional Statistics](#) (cat. no. 1386.0), used these data and provides further insight into population growth across Australia's regions. The article explores population growth in capital cities, outer suburbs and coastal areas as well as providing key findings for each state and territory at the LGA level.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD GEOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATION

The latest edition of the [Australian Standard Geographical Classification \(ASGC\), July 2009](#) (cat. no. 1216.0) was released on 16 September 2009. The ASGC is a geographical classification system designed and maintained by the ABS, which divides Australia into geographical areas for the purpose of collecting and disseminating statistics. The publication provides details of the statistical geography effective at 1 July 2009 and includes maps of these areas.

See the feature article in this issue ['The New Australian Statistical Geography Standard'](#) for information about changes to the geographical classification system that will be introduced in 2011.

USE OF THE INTERNET ON FARMS

Released on 17 August 2009, [Use of the Internet on Farms, Australia, 2007-08](#) (cat. no. 8150.0) presents statistics on the use of the Internet on farms for business operations in Australia. The publication includes data on the number of farms with Internet connections, the type of Internet connection, industry and estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO). Some of these data are available at the Statistical Division level. The publication highlights that a higher proportion of farms in remote areas use the Internet

for business operations when compared to smaller farms located around urban areas.

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NATIONAL REGIONAL PROFILE

The fifth edition of the National Regional Profile (NRP) is due for release in early 2010. This edition will contain a range of data from 2004 to 2008 presented on the geographical boundaries as described in the 2008 edition of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). The NRP presents a range of key social and economic data for various levels of the ASGC, including Local Government Areas and Statistical Local Areas, making it a useful tool for users of small area data.

The current version of the NRP, containing data for the years 2002 to 2006, can be accessed through the [NRP Welcome Page](#).

ESTIMATES OF PERSONAL INCOME FOR SMALL AREAS

Scheduled for release in late 2009, Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas (cat. no. 6524.0.55.002) will contain estimates of the sources and amount of personal income people received for the years 2003-04 to 2006-07. Compiled using aggregated individual income tax data from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), this release will contain information on income from Wages and salaries, Own unincorporated business, Investment, Superannuation and annuities, Other income (excluding Government pensions and allowances) and Total income (excluding Government pensions and allowances). Data will be available for various levels of the 2008 Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), including Local Government Areas.

The current issue can be found in [Estimates of Personal Income for Small Areas, 2001-02 to 2005-06](#) (cat. no. 6524.0.55.002).

BIRTHS

Births, Australia, 2008 (cat. no. 3301.0) will be released on 12 October 2009. This publication will present a range of statistics on confinements and live births, including data on male and female births, births of Indigenous children, age and birthplace of parents, duration of marriage, nuptial and exnuptial births, single and multiple births and fertility rates. Small level data will be available for the number of births and fertility rates for Local Government Areas, Statistical Local Areas, and Statistical Divisions.

The current issue can be found in [Births, Australia, 2007](#) (cat. no. 3301.0).

DEATHS

Scheduled for release on 25 November 2009, Deaths, Australia, 2008 (cat. no. 3302.0) will contain a range of statistics on deaths and mortality for 2008. The publication will include the number of deaths, classified by age, sex, birthplace, marital status, cause of death and usual residence by state or territory, as well as information on infant deaths, deaths of Indigenous persons, age-specific death rates, expectation of life at birth and standardised death rates. At the Local Government Area level, data on the number of deaths and standardised death rates will be available.

The current issue can be found in [Deaths, Australia, 2007](#) (cat. no. 3302.0).

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OTHER NEWS AND CONTACTS

COMMUNITY INDICATORS SUMMIT

Rachael Uhr, Social Policy Advisor from the Queensland Local Government Association recently spoke at the Community Indicators Summit held in Brisbane on 22-23 July 2009. Rachael's presentation explored how the Queensland Local Government landscape is changing quickly with the introduction of the new Local Government Act, legislated community plans, amalgamations, regionalism, rapid growth, increased development, shifting and ageing populations. Rachael emphasised the importance of community indicators in Local Government planning and service delivery and their impact on the social, economic and physical fabric of the local community.

Around 170 delegates from government, academia and community organisations were keen to put forward their questions, ideas and thoughts during the Summit. Community-based indicators are becoming a hot topic as global discussion increases on the need to develop a more comprehensive view of progress than just the economic one (Gross Domestic Product).

The Community Indicators Summit is just one of hundreds of initiatives being held around the world relating to measuring progress and well-being at international, national and sub-national levels. Outcomes from the Summit, including the Summit declaration prepared by delegates, will be presented as part of Australia's contribution to the 3rd Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) World Forum on 'Statistics, Knowledge and Policy' to be held in Busan, Korea in October 2009.

The Summit, hosted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), is also an important event for advancing the National Statistical Service (NSS). The Summit highlighted the benefits of having integrated information management methods and promoted a coordinated, coherent and consistent approach to the development of community indicators across Australia.

The Summit video presentations are available through the NSS website. See www.nss.gov.au/communityindicators09 for more details.

If you would like more information on the Summit or future NSS events please email inquiries@nss.gov.au.

REGIONAL STATISTICS THEME PAGE

The Regional Statistics theme page is a great place to start if you are looking for data or information about regional statistics. The Regional Releases page has recently been updated to make it even easier to find the data that you are looking for.

The Regional Releases page contains links to ABS products containing regional data, organised under the topic headings Economy, Population and People, Industry and Environment and Energy. The page also includes links to compendia products, such as the National Regional Profile and state-specific publications. The Noticeboard is updated regularly to provide users with information on the latest developments in regional statistics, while the theme page also provides links to other relevant theme pages and information about using and interpreting statistics.

HELP FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE ABS WEBSITE

For help in finding data for your Local Government Area and information about how to keep up to date with the latest ABS releases and available training, click on the following link to view the ['Services We Provide to Local Government'](#) information pages.

Alternatively, go to the [ABS Home Page](#), click on 'Services' along the top navigation bar and follow the link to 'Local Government'.


NEWSLETTER AND ABS CONTACT DETAILS

This newsletter is designed to improve communication between the ABS and the Local Government Sector. New ABS initiatives to assist local government organisations will be announced in this newsletter as they evolve.

We appreciate receiving your views and suggestions about this newsletter so that it remains useful and assists you to understand and use ABS statistics. We also welcome suggestions for articles that you feel should be included. Please email your comments and suggestions to regional.statistics@abs.gov.au or telephone (08) 8237 7350.

For other enquiries contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or e-mail client.services@abs.gov.au.

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Contains a range of information on ABS developments in rural and regional statistics, and information about recent releases at Local Government level or other regional levels.

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